

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

United States of America,                    ) Criminal Action  
  ) No. 21-cr-71  
  ) Plaintiff,                    )  
  ) PLEA AND SENTENCE  
vs.    )  
  ) Washington, DC  
Karl Dresch,                                    ) August 4, 2021  
  ) Time: 9:30 a.m.  
  ) Defendant.                )

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TRANSCRIPT OF PLEA AND SENTENCE  
HELD BEFORE  
THE HONORABLE JUDGE AMY BERMAN JACKSON  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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A P P E A R A N C E S

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Court Reporter:           Janice E. Dickman, RMR, CRR, CRC  
                                 Official Court Reporter  
                                 United States Courthouse, Room 6523  
                                 333 Constitution Avenue, NW  
                                 Washington, DC 20001  
                                 202-354-3267

1 MR. SMITH: Good morning, Your Honor.

2 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Your Honor, this morning we  
3 have criminal case No. 21-71, the *United States of America v.*  
4 *Karl Dresch*. The defendant is present and in the courtroom.

5 Will counsel for the government please proceed to her  
6 microphone and identify herself for the record.

7 MS. BLACKWELL: May it please the Court, Assistant  
8 United States Attorney Jennifer Blackwell appearing on behalf  
9 of the United States.

10 THE COURT: Good morning.

11 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Counsel for the defendant.

12 MR. SMITH: Good morning, Your Honor. Jerry Smith,  
13 attorney for Karl Dresch, who is present.

14 THE COURT: You'll have to be seated. If you've been  
15 vaccinated, and when it comes time to speak, I think it  
16 actually helps the court reporter if you remove your mask when  
17 you speak into the microphone. And given the circumstances and  
18 my desire to not require you to share the lectern and share the  
19 microphone, you can address the Court from where you're seated  
20 and use the microphones there for that purpose. And you can  
21 decide, Mr. Smith, though, if you would prefer to use this  
22 lectern, or you would prefer Mr. Dresch to use this lectern,  
23 he's welcome to do that, too.

24 MR. SMITH: I would be comfortable, Your Honor. I  
25 know typically when pleas are done the defendant and the

1 attorney approach the lectern and stand there together. I'm  
2 fully vaccinated and I'm comfortable doing that with  
3 Mr. Dresch, if the Court is okay with that.

4 THE COURT: All right. We are. And I think  
5 everybody -- there's plenty of protection between you and the  
6 courtroom personnel, and so I'm fine with that. It's a very  
7 personal, important event and I'm glad that you've decided to  
8 do it in person, instead of by video, given the solemnity of  
9 the occasion. And I'm fine with the two of you using the  
10 lectern when we get to that point.

11 I do want to note that we invite members of the press  
12 and the public to listen in to these proceedings on the public  
13 line, and you have an absolute right to attend and report on  
14 what transpires during court proceedings, but the recording or  
15 dissemination of a recording of these proceedings is a  
16 violation of our court rules.

17 All right. Mr. Smith, I understand the defendant  
18 wishes to enter a plea of guilty this morning, is that correct?

19 MR. SMITH: Yes, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: All right. Before we proceed any  
21 further, our deputy clerk needs to administer the oath to the  
22 defendant. And why don't you and Mr. Dresch come up to the  
23 lectern at this time.

24 (Whereupon Karl Dresch was duly sworn.)

25 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Dresch, the purpose of

1 this hearing this morning is for you to make a decision,  
2 whether you want to go to trial on the government's charges  
3 against you or whether you want to enter a plea of guilty. In  
4 order to make such an important decision, it's essential that  
5 you understand everything that's going on and that I'm going to  
6 be explaining to you. If you don't understand something that I  
7 ask, please let me know and I will try to restate it and  
8 explain it in a more clear fashion.

9 Also, if at any point you want to consult with your  
10 lawyer before you answer one of my questions, you have the  
11 right to do that. Do you understand that much?

12 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: Okay. And do you also understand that  
14 you're now under oath and that if you don't answer my questions  
15 truthfully, that that itself could be the offense of perjury or  
16 making a false statement?

17 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

18 THE COURT: All right. Now, Mr. Smith, as I  
19 understand it, the defendant's going to plead guilty to a  
20 misdemeanor: Parading, demonstrating or picketing in a Capitol  
21 building, in violation of 40 U.S. Code § 5104(e)(2)(G). The  
22 remaining counts will be dismissed and he will be sentenced  
23 today; is that correct?

24 MR. SMITH: Yes, Your Honor.

25 THE COURT: And also as a part of the plea he's

1 agreeing to pay restitution and to participate in a debriefing  
2 interview conducted by law enforcement. Is that also correct?

3 MR. SMITH: That is correct, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: And he is asking to be sentenced today,  
5 which, given the statute, would have to be limited to a  
6 sentence of time served. Is that basically the outline of the  
7 plea, as I understand it?

8 MR. SMITH: It is, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Okay. And, Mr. Dresch, do you generally  
10 understand that those are the terms of the agreement, even  
11 though I'm going to go over all of them with you later?

12 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: Okay. Now, in order to decide whether I  
14 should accept your guilty plea this morning it's necessary for  
15 me to make sure that you understand the consequences of a plea  
16 of guilty and the terms of your plea. So the law requires me  
17 to ask a number of questions of you and some of them are  
18 personal, but they're all designed so that I can be sure that  
19 you know what you're doing today.

20 To start, can you tell me how old you are?

21 THE DEFENDANT: Forty-one years old, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: All right. And I know the answer to this  
23 question, but can you read and write?

24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

25 THE COURT: How far did you go in school?

1 THE DEFENDANT: Finished high school.

2 THE COURT: Okay. And where were you born?

3 THE DEFENDANT: New Haven, Connecticut.

4 THE COURT: Have you taken any drugs or alcohol in  
5 the last 48 hours or any medicine that could affect your  
6 ability to understand what you're doing by pleading guilty?

7 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: Have you ever received any treatment for  
9 any type of mental illness or emotional disturbance?

10 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

11 THE COURT: Have you received a copy of the  
12 indictment pending against you, the charges in this case, and  
13 have you fully discussed the charges in the case with your  
14 lawyer?

15 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: Are you completely satisfied with the  
17 services of your lawyer in this case?

18 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: Have you had enough time to talk with him  
20 and discuss the case and the plea offer and whether or not you  
21 should accept it?

22 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

23 THE COURT: Ms. Blackwell, are you aware of the  
24 existence of any exculpatory information in this case that has  
25 not been produced to the defendant?

1 MS. BLACKWELL: No, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: All right. And based on the defendant's  
3 sentencing memo and what I learned during the bond proceedings,  
4 I appreciate the fact that the assistant United States attorney  
5 in this case has been forthright from the start about what this  
6 defendant did, but significantly, what he didn't do. And I  
7 expect that of every prosecutor in this courtroom, and I  
8 appreciate that on your part, Ms. Blackwell.

9 MS. BLACKWELL: Thank you, Your Honor.

10 THE COURT: All right. You can be seated.

11 Now, Mr. Dresch, you have certain rights in a  
12 criminal case and I have to go over all of them with you.  
13 First of all, most important, you have a right to plead not  
14 guilty and have a jury trial in this case, and that would mean  
15 that 12 citizens of the District of Columbia would sit over  
16 there in that jury box and they would be the ones who determine  
17 your guilt or innocence based on evidence presented in this  
18 courtroom. Do you understand that you have a right to a jury  
19 trial?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: And do you understand that if you had a  
22 trial, you would have the right to be represented by your  
23 lawyer at that trial?

24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

25 THE COURT: And do you also understand that at a

1 trial you would have the right, through your lawyer, to  
2 confront and cross-examine the witnesses against you?

3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: And do you understand that you would have  
5 the right to present your own witnesses, and the right to  
6 subpoena them and require them to be here to testify in your  
7 defense?

8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: And do you also understand that if there  
10 were a trial, you would have the right to testify and present  
11 evidence on your behalf, if you wanted to, but you wouldn't  
12 have to testify or present any evidence if you didn't want to  
13 because you can't be forced to incriminate yourself or present  
14 evidence in your own trial. Do you understand that?

15 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: All right. And do I also understand that  
17 unless and until I accept your guilty plea, right now you are  
18 presumed by the law to be innocent and it remains the  
19 government's burden to prove your guilt beyond a reasonable  
20 doubt and until it does, you can't be convicted of a crime?

21 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: So, now do you understand that if you  
23 plead guilty in this case and I accept your guilty plea, you're  
24 giving up all the rights I've just explained because there will  
25 not be a trial?



1 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Now, I have in front of me a document  
3 where you put that in writing, it says, "Waiver of Trial by  
4 Jury," are you the one who signed it over the word "Defendant"  
5 on the first page?

6 MR. SMITH: Court's indulgence.

7 THE COURT: Yes.

8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Okay. I'm going to sign it, too. I have  
10 no idea what the date is. What date is it?

11 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: August 4, Your Honor.

12 THE COURT: Fourth. All right. Now, do you also  
13 understand that if you went to trial and you were convicted,  
14 you would have a right to appeal your conviction to the Court  
15 of Appeals and to have a lawyer help you prepare that appeal?

16 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Okay. So do you understand that by  
18 pleading guilty you're giving up your right to appeal, too,  
19 including your right to appeal your sentence, unless I sentence  
20 you to longer than the statute permits me to sentence you to,  
21 or if your lawyer was ineffective in connection with this case.  
22 But otherwise there's not going to be an appeal. Do you  
23 understand that?

24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

25 THE COURT: And the law has several provisions in the

1 Rules of Civil Procedure, in 22 U.S. Code § 2255, where after a  
2 conviction people can come back and attack those convictions in  
3 court, saying there's some legal flaw or factual flaw to them.  
4 Do you understand that you're giving up your right to do that,  
5 too, unless there's some newly discovered evidence or if your  
6 lawyer was ineffective?

7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: And do you understand that even if you're  
9 permitted under those circumstances to bring a challenge,  
10 you're giving up your right to appeal if that challenge doesn't  
11 go well at the trial level?

12 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: Okay. In addition the Federal Rules of  
14 Evidence, the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure have rules  
15 that protect you and say if your plea gets withdrawn, the  
16 government can't -- and there's a trial, the government can't  
17 use as evidence against you the fact that you stood here and  
18 admitted your guilt to me on the date you pled guilty. But as  
19 part of your plea, do you understand that you're giving up that  
20 right, and if for some reason this plea gets withdrawn and you  
21 end up at a trial, we can use in evidence against you the fact  
22 that you admitted these facts today?

23 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: So, and having gone over all of your  
25 rights, do you want to plead guilty in this case and admit that

1       you committed a crime on January 6th and give up your rights to  
2       a trial and your right to appeal and all the rights that I've  
3       just explained you would have if your case went to trial?

4               THE DEFENDANT:   Yes, Your Honor.

5               THE COURT:   Now, Mr. Dresch, I'm going to ask the  
6       prosecutor to tell you and tell me what happened in this case.  
7       And I want you to listen carefully because when she's finished,  
8       I'm going to ask you if everything she told me is true and  
9       accurate.   And I understand that we have a written statement of  
10      offense in this case, but it is my practice -- not just in this  
11      case, but in every case -- to have the prosecutor put the facts  
12      on the record and have you hear them out loud and then tell me  
13      if you agree with them or not.

14              So, Ms. Blackwell, can you please tell the Court and  
15      the defendant what the government's evidence would show if this  
16      case went to trial?

17              MS. BLACKWELL:   Your Honor, if this case went to  
18      trial, the government would be prepared to present evidence  
19      about the attack of the U.S. Capitol on January 6 of 2021.   We  
20      would be prepared to show that on January 6 of 2021 a joint  
21      section of the United States Congress convened at the U.S.  
22      Capitol, which is located at First Street Southeast in  
23      Washington, D.C., and during that session there were elected  
24      representatives of the House and Senate that were meeting in  
25      the chambers at the U.S. Capitol to certify the vote count of

1 the Electoral College on the 2020 presidential election which  
2 had taken place on November 3rd of 2020. That joint session  
3 began at approximately 1 p.m.

4 Shortly thereafter, at approximately 1:30 p.m., the  
5 House and Senate adjourned to separate chambers to resolve a  
6 particular objection. Vice President Mike Pence was present  
7 and presiding, first in the joint session and then in the  
8 Senate chamber.

9 As the proceedings continued and with Vice President  
10 Pence present and presiding over the Senate, a large crowd  
11 started to gather outside the U.S. Capitol. There were  
12 temporary and permanent barricades that were in place around  
13 the exterior of the U.S. Capitol building, and U.S. Capitol  
14 police were present and attempting to keep the crowd away from  
15 the Capitol building. But at approximately 2 p.m. certain  
16 individuals in the crowd forced their way through, up and over  
17 the barricades and officers of the U.S. Capitol and the crowd  
18 advanced to the exterior facade of the building. At that time  
19 the certification proceedings were still underway and the  
20 exterior doors and windows of the U.S. Capitol were locked or  
21 were otherwise secured.

22 Members of the Capitol police attempted to maintain  
23 order and keep the crowd from entering the Capitol. However,  
24 shortly after 2 p.m. individuals in the crowd forced entry into  
25 the U.S. Capitol, including by breaking windows and by

1 assaulting members of law enforcement as others in the crowd  
2 encouraged and assisted those acts. This riot resulted in  
3 substantial damage to the U.S. Capitol. The government will be  
4 prepared to show that it requires the expenditure of more than  
5 \$1.4 million for repairs.

6 In this case, with respect to Mr. Dresch's conduct,  
7 the government would be prepared to show that on or about  
8 January 3rd of 2021 Mr. Dresch posted that he was preparing to  
9 go to Washington, D.C., and that between January 3rd and  
10 January 6 of 2021, other posts on his social media account  
11 reflected preparations to travel, and then travel to  
12 Washington, D.C.

13 On January 6, Mr. Dresch entered the Capitol and he  
14 posted pictures of himself and the crowd within the U.S.  
15 Capitol, including within the crypt and in the Visitors'  
16 Center. He posted a statement on Facebook stating, "We, the  
17 people, took back our house and those traitors know who's  
18 really in charge." At about 3:13 p.m., again on January 6 of  
19 2021, Mr. Dresch posted a photograph taken outside the U.S.  
20 Capitol with the comment, "Whose house? Our house."  
21 Mr. Dresch knew at the time that he entered the U.S. Capitol  
22 building that he did not have permission to enter the building  
23 and that Mr. Dresch paraded, demonstrated, or picketed on that  
24 date.

25 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Dresch, is what the

1 prosecutor just told me a true and had accurate description of  
2 what you did in this case?

3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

4 THE COURT: And did you in fact enter the Capitol  
5 building without permission on January 6th, when it was closed  
6 to the public while Congress certified the results of the  
7 Presidential election?

8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Now, Ms. Blackwell was reading from an  
10 agreed statement of facts, and I have before me a document  
11 called Statement of Offense. On the last page it says  
12 "Defendant's Acknowledgment," where it says, "I, Karl Dresch,  
13 have read this statement of offense and have discussed it with  
14 my attorney." Are you the one who signed it over the space for  
15 your signature, agreeing that it is true and that you're  
16 signing it voluntarily?

17 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

18 THE COURT: All right. And are you the one who wrote  
19 the initials K.D. and the date on every page, to let me know  
20 that you'd read and agreed with every page of this document?

21 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: All right. I have one more document in  
23 front of me, and it's a letter from Ms. Blackwell to your  
24 lawyer that sets out the terms of the plea agreement. Have you  
25 had an opportunity to review this document and go over it with

1 your lawyer?

2 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: And are you the one who signed it on the  
4 last page, where it says, "Defendant's acceptance," indicating  
5 that you read every page of the agreement, discussed it with  
6 your attorney and you understand it and you agree to it?

7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: And are you the one also who initialed  
9 every page K.D., with the date, to let me know that you didn't  
10 just sign the last page, you read every page of the plea  
11 agreement?

12 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: All right. So I'm going to go over the  
14 most important terms of it with you, I'm not going to read the  
15 whole thing line by line.

16 As I understand it, you're agreeing to plead guilty  
17 of the offense of parading, demonstrating or picketing in a  
18 Capitol building, in violation of 40 U.S. Code § 5104(c)(2)(G).  
19 Do you understand that if I accept your guilty plea in this  
20 case, you could receive a maximum sentence of up to six months  
21 in prison?

22 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

23 THE COURT: And do you understand that I cannot  
24 sentence you to a term of supervised release afterwards in  
25 connection with that offense? The entire sentence would be the

1 sentence of imprisonment.

2 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: And that is because the offense is a  
4 class B misdemeanor, as defined by 18 U.S. Code § 3559(a)(7)  
5 and under 18 U.S. Code § 19 a Class B misdemeanor, is what's  
6 called a petty offense, and under 18 U.S. Code § 3583(b)(3)  
7 supervised release is not available for a petty offense.

8 But, do you understand that I could sentence you to  
9 pay a fine of up to \$5,000 for this offense?

10 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

11 THE COURT: And do you understand that you have to  
12 pay a special assessment to the court of \$10 for this  
13 misdemeanor offense?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

15 THE COURT: And do you also understand that as part  
16 of your plea agreement, there is an agreement that you're going  
17 to be sentenced to pay restitution, \$500, towards the total  
18 damages to the U.S. Capitol that day, given your participation  
19 in the events on that day?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: And do you understand that the plea  
22 agreement includes an agreement by you to be interviewed by law  
23 enforcement concerning the events surrounding January 6th and  
24 your role in it?

25 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.



1 THE COURT: And do you understand that as a condition  
2 of this plea agreement you're going to be doing that later  
3 today?

4 MR. SMITH: Yes, Your Honor. We'll do it either  
5 later today or tomorrow, depending on when he gets released.  
6 If he gets released late tonight, I'm going to put him in a  
7 hotel and then we'll go see the U.S. attorney in the morning.  
8 Hopefully we'll get released in time to do it today, otherwise  
9 we'll do it tomorrow.

10 THE COURT: We're going to do everything we can do to  
11 make sure the marshals get the release order as promptly as  
12 possible. But do you understand that you're going to be doing  
13 that before you return home to Michigan?

14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

15 THE COURT: And do you understand that as part of  
16 that interview you've agreed to make your phone and social  
17 media accounts available to law enforcement?

18 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: All right. Now, this defendant's initial  
20 appearance in this case was before the District Court in  
21 Michigan on January 20th, 2021. Given the maximum sentence  
22 that can be imposed in this case and the length of time the  
23 defendant has already been incarcerated, the parties have  
24 requested that I sentence him today. I find this is  
25 appropriate and that it makes more sense than his immediate

1 release, for sentencing to be conducted on a later date. I  
2 received significant information about this defendant in  
3 connection with the bond review motion, including detail about  
4 his history and characteristics and his criminal history, as  
5 well as the sort of letters that one would receive at  
6 sentencing. And so putting off the sentencing would serve no  
7 purpose because once the six months has been served, there's no  
8 opportunity to craft a period of supervised release or order  
9 anything else.

10 In connection with that, though, ordinarily one of  
11 the factors I would have to consider is what the U.S.  
12 sentencing guidelines would recommend. However, the parties  
13 agree here that because the offense is a Class B misdemeanor,  
14 as I've already stated, as defined by 18 U.S. Code  
15 § 3559(a)(7), the sentencing guidelines do not apply, per  
16 Section 1B1.9 of the guidelines. So, Mr. Dresch, do you  
17 understand that we're going to go straight into your sentencing  
18 and you're going to be sentenced today?

19 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: And do you understand that accomplishing  
21 that means you're giving up your right to have a presentence  
22 report prepared by the probation officer, having your lawyer  
23 look at it and the government's lawyer look at it and getting  
24 all that background information about you and your history  
25 before I impose sentence?

1 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Mr. Dresch, has anyone made any promises  
3 to you about what sentence I'm going to impose in this case if  
4 I accept your guilty plea?

5 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

6 THE COURT: Do you understand that it's up to me,  
7 even though I can never sentence you to more than the statute  
8 would permit?

9 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

10 THE COURT: Has anyone forced you, threatened you, or  
11 coerced you in any way into entering this plea of guilty?

12 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: Has anybody made any promises to you in  
14 connection with your guilty plea, other than the ones contained  
15 in the plea letter or that we've talked about in court today?

16 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Are you entering this plea of guilty  
18 voluntarily and of your own free will because you are guilty  
19 and for no other reason?

20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: Is there anything you don't understand  
22 about this proceeding or about your plea in this case?

23 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: Is there anything you want to ask me or  
25 ask your lawyer before I ask you for your final decision about

1 pleading guilty in this case?

2 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: Are you ready now to make a decision  
4 about whether you want to enter a plea of guilty or whether you  
5 want to go to trial?

6 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

7 THE COURT: And what's your decision?

8 THE DEFENDANT: To enter a plea of guilty, Your  
9 Honor.

10 THE COURT: All right. I am satisfied that this  
11 defendant is fully competent and capable of making a decision  
12 today, that he understands the nature and consequences of what  
13 he's doing, that he's acting voluntarily and of his own free  
14 will, and that there is an adequate factual basis for his plea.  
15 Therefore, I will accept the plea.

16 And pursuant to the request of the parties, I do  
17 think it's appropriate to move on to the sentencing phase of  
18 these proceedings. But the first person I'm going to call upon  
19 to speak is Ms. Blackwell. So, if Mr. Dresch and Mr. Smith, if  
20 you want to sit down for a moment --

21 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: -- you're permitted to do that.

23 All right. Would the government like an opportunity  
24 to speak regarding the appropriate sentence in this case?

25 MS. BLACKWELL: Yes, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: All right. Go ahead.

2 MS. BLACKWELL: Your Honor, the government would  
3 first like to move to unseal the sentencing memorandum that was  
4 filed yesterday in this case.

5 THE COURT: I think that's appropriate. Do you have  
6 any objection to that, Mr. Smith?

7 MR. SMITH: No, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: And I think yours was filed under seal as  
9 well.

10 MR. SMITH: And I would also move to unseal mine.

11 THE COURT: All right. They will both be unsealed.

12 MS. BLACKWELL: Your Honor, the Court is well  
13 familiar with the facts of that case, Mr. Dresch's background,  
14 but the government would like the opportunity to highlight a  
15 few factors.

16 The government recognizes, of course, that Mr. Dresch  
17 has already served the term of incarceration that represents  
18 the statutory maximum in this case, but the government believes  
19 it is important, as we did in the sentencing memorandum, to  
20 outline why the 3553 factors would dictate a sentence of  
21 imprisonment of the maximum in this case.

22 On the spectrum, Mr. Dresch's circumstances put him  
23 at the high end with respect to the nature and circumstances.  
24 While the government has indicated that Mr. Dresch did not  
25 engage in any violence that day at the Capitol, or engage with

1 law enforcement in a physical manner, or cause the destruction  
2 of property, indeed, he was in the Capitol for approximately 25  
3 minutes. He came in a door through the Senate side and then  
4 later he left through a window next to that same door because  
5 there were rioters that were actually coming into the Capitol  
6 at that same time. He could not leave through the door, so he  
7 left, at the direction of law enforcement, through a window  
8 next to the door. During that time he traveled to the crypt  
9 and visitors' center.

10 That being said, despite his conduct in the Capitol,  
11 he was responsible for a number of social media postings both  
12 before he went to the Capitol, equating the events of January 6  
13 with this country's Independence Day, then afterward, as the  
14 Court is aware, he made several comments showing his enthusiasm  
15 and support for the events that occurred on January 6. We  
16 believe that those commentaries and those actions and that  
17 support for what happened on January 6 -- which, of course, is an  
18 extremely serious event in this nation's history -- would  
19 warrant a term of incarceration at the higher end for this  
20 defendant.

21 Specifically, with regard to his --

22 THE COURT: You mean at the higher end of the  
23 sentence available for the misdemeanor, not at the higher end  
24 of all the sentences available for the other offenses in the  
25 indictment?

1 MS. BLACKWELL: Yes, Your Honor. Thank you for the  
2 clarification.

3 THE COURT: All right.

4 MS. BLACKWELL: In terms of his history and  
5 characteristics, he would be in criminal history category 3,  
6 with five points, if the sentencing guidelines applied in this  
7 case. As Your Honor is aware from reviewing the records for  
8 his bond hearing, he was involved in a very serious incident  
9 with law enforcement, fleeing and eluding law enforcement over  
10 an interstate, high-speed car chase that endangered the lives  
11 of not only of law enforcement, but the innocent civilians.  
12 Clearly, the defendant has not learned from those past  
13 incarcerations and infractions that these are serious events  
14 and that he needs to stay out of criminal trouble, which he did  
15 not do when he came to the Capitol on that date and  
16 participated in the events on that date. And, therefore, we  
17 believe that under that factor that would warrant the maximum  
18 term of imprisonment that is available for this misdemeanor.

19 With respect to the seriousness of the offense and  
20 respect for the law, that criteria supports a term of  
21 incarceration, even for misdemeanors, and certainly for  
22 Mr. Dresch in this instance.

23 With respect to the need for specific and general  
24 deterrence, it is specific because a six months of federal jail  
25 time will hopefully deter Mr. Dresch from participating in this

1 kind of activity again, and also general because it is the  
2 government's belief that others will be deterred from  
3 participating in this kind of activity, with the knowledge that  
4 they also can serve jail time even if they are pleading or  
5 conducting themselves in misdemeanor infractions.

6 And last, with respect to the need to avoid  
7 sentencing disparities. Each case, of course, needs to be  
8 evaluated based on its independent factors, but the government  
9 is not aware that given the circumstances of this case, and  
10 sort of the unique posture that this case presents itself in,  
11 that a six-month prison term would cause any issues with  
12 respect to any sentencings disparities with other defendants.

13 THE COURT: All right.

14 MS. BLACKWELL: Thank you, Your Honor.

15 THE COURT: Thank you. Before I impose sentence,  
16 Mr. Smith, would you like to speak on the defendant's behalf?

17 MR. SMITH: Just briefly, Your Honor. I know that I  
18 submitted a sealed sentencing memorandum, which has now been  
19 unsealed. Know Your Honor, of course, has read it. I did want  
20 to address a couple points.

21 The restitution, Mr. Dresch was deemed to be indigent  
22 when he appeared in front of the magistrate in the Western  
23 District of Michigan. He was given court-appointed counsel  
24 there. I think the federal public defender for the Western  
25 District represented him in those proceedings. And, of course,



1 when he came here he was continued to be deemed indigent, and  
2 I'm court-appointed counsel. So I would submit he's not really  
3 in a position to pay any sort of fine. Of course, he will pay  
4 the restitution and the \$10 special assessment.

5 For the restitution, the \$500, he can pay it in  
6 fairly short order. I'm not sure he's going to be able to  
7 access the funds today. We would ask for a two-week period,  
8 perhaps, to get the money. But it's just a matter of being out  
9 and being able to get access to the funds so that he can pay  
10 that in fairly short order. I think that's really all I have  
11 to say, everything else is in my memo.

12 THE COURT: All right.

13 MR. SMITH: If you have any questions, I would be  
14 happy to answer.

15 THE COURT: I don't have any questions.

16 Mr. Dresch, is there anything you would like to say  
17 before I impose sentence in this case?

18 THE DEFENDANT: No, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: All right. I'm going to ask you, then,  
20 to come back to the lectern then while I tell you what the  
21 sentence is going to be in this case, and maybe speaking a  
22 little bit longer than one might anticipate, given the fact  
23 that it's a forgone conclusion.

24 I'm going to review all of the factors in the  
25 sentencing statute, which is 18 U.S. Code § 3553(a) that says

1        what judges are supposed to think about when they sentence  
2        people -- even though I don't have very much discretion, or any  
3        discretion left at this time -- because I think it's important  
4        to detail why I think the six months is an appropriate  
5        sentence, even though it's already been served. In other  
6        words, I don't want to leave the misimpression that the rush to  
7        plead and be sentenced and released today on time served is  
8        some sort of statement about the legitimacy of the detention in  
9        the first place.

10                My sentence is going to mean that the sentence was  
11        sufficient and just under all the circumstances. And every  
12        defendant in every one of these cases is different, and every  
13        sentence needs to be considered individually, in light of the  
14        sentencing statute, and that's what I feel obligated to do.

15                The first thing I'm supposed to consider is the  
16        nature and circumstances of the offense, which is what did you  
17        do? And this defendant did not end up in the Capitol by  
18        mistake. He was not simply swept along by events, and there  
19        was no ambiguity about why he was here. His own statements  
20        provide the context for the acts described in the statement of  
21        offense and they are part of the record.

22                Six weeks before January 6, on November 23rd, 2020,  
23        the defendant posted, "It's war everywhere if we let this  
24        election get stolen." He was posting, "Stop the steal" as  
25        early as December 16th, 2020. The day after former President

1 Trump Tweeted, "Statistically impossible to have lost the 2020  
2 election. Big protest in D.C. on January 6, be there, be --  
3 will be wild." The defendant posted 7-4-1776 equals January 6,  
4 2021. So he was already likening it to a revolution.

5 The statement of offense specifically references the  
6 fact that the defendant posted on social media about his plans  
7 to travel to D.C. on January 3rd through January 5th. Well,  
8 what did he say?

9 On January 3rd, 2021 the defendant posted that he was  
10 preparing to go to Washington, D.C. and that he was prepared  
11 for chemical attacks and whatnot and, quote, No excuses, no  
12 retreat, no surrender, take the streets, take back our country.  
13 January 6, 2021 equals 7-4-1776. That was all in caps.

14 On January 5th in 2021 he posted, "Stop the steal.  
15 This is the last stand of the United States to remain free."  
16 And then he gets here. The U.S. Capitol was closed to the  
17 public while, in accordance with the Constitution, a joint  
18 session of Congress had been convened to certified the vote of  
19 the Electoral College in the 2020 Presidential election.

20 Vice President Mike Pence, a Republican, was present  
21 and presiding, as the Constitution required him to do. The  
22 U.S. Capitol police officers, federal law enforcement officers,  
23 doing their jobs, surrounding the building, were overcome. The  
24 defendant was one of the many individuals who made their way  
25 into the building, past the lines of the officers who were

1 attempting to keep the crowd away from the building. He was  
2 one of the individuals who entered the closed building. And  
3 the certification process was indeed interrupted as members of  
4 Congress and the Vice President had to be spirited to safety or  
5 were forced to hide.

6 That was the point of the trip, to disrupt the  
7 process. The defendant posted a picture at 3:14 p.m. with the  
8 caption, "We are in, inside the Capitol, below the rotunda."  
9 He broadcast a video, as he said, to set the record straight  
10 "Antifa did not take the Capitol, that was patriots. We, the  
11 people, took back our house and now those traitors know who's  
12 really in charge."

13 So he was not your typical tourist. But it's also a  
14 significant aspect of the nature and circumstances of this  
15 offense that he did not do anything once he got inside. He was  
16 peaceful, he was respectful; he didn't break anything, he  
17 didn't hurt anyone, and the sentence has to reflect that, too.  
18 It's essential to differentiate him from those involved in  
19 threats against public officials and assaults on police  
20 officers.

21 However, the defendant bragged that day that they,  
22 quote, had the cops booking it, close quote. And his tone  
23 didn't change afterwards. He was not chastened or shocked if  
24 he turned on the news and saw the defilement and destruction  
25 that was left behind, or saw what happened to the many law

1 enforcement officers when, on January 7, 2021, he commented on  
2 someone else's post by saying, "Mike Pence gave our country to  
3 the communist hordes; traitor scum like the rest of them. We  
4 have your back. Give the word and we will be back even  
5 stronger."

6 On the same date he said, "Bro., you should have been  
7 there. We wasn't violent, but we took the Capitol. Antifa  
8 didn't do it. They may have had some idiots undercover in the  
9 crowd, but it was us that got in. It was grand. Best day  
10 ever. I think it was a good show of force. Look at what we  
11 can do peacefully" -- unclear whether it was peaceful, even  
12 though he was -- "wait until we decide to get pissed. And  
13 look, if they can't hold the Capitol with thousands of cops,  
14 how can they tell us what to do 1000 miles away?"

15 And then the defendant got wind of how others were  
16 reacting to what had occurred and that they were naming names.  
17 He posted a series of increasingly threatening messages about  
18 the person he believed had posted information about individuals  
19 she knew from the area who had come to D.C. Including saying,  
20 "Now they want to snitch me out, LOL. Bunch of losers. I sent  
21 her thing to tons of patriots and now it's gone. Ha a. I'm  
22 sure I made an FBI folder, but F it, I know who my enemies  
23 are."

24 So the nature and circumstances of the offense makes  
25 several things very clear. The defendant did not come to D.C.

1 to attend a rally. Defendant did not spend six months in jail  
2 because of his political views. He was not a political  
3 prisoner. He was not prosecuted for exercising his First  
4 Amendment rights. He just pled guilty to a federal offense.  
5 He just admitted that he broke the law. He did explain at the  
6 time, "Trump is the only big shot I trust right now, so I'm  
7 going."

8 But we're not here today because he supported the  
9 former President. Millions of people voted for him and did not  
10 heed his call to descend on the nation's Capitol. He was  
11 arrested because he was an enthusiastic participant in an  
12 effort to subvert and undo the electoral process. He came to  
13 D.C. and encountered others to do the same; not to hear the  
14 outgoing President speak, but, as he put it, to stop the steal.  
15 He was not here to see the sights. He was here to interrupt  
16 the certification of the election, to subvert democracy --  
17 which is based on the will of the people -- and replace it with  
18 a will of the mob.

19 He may very well have sincerely believed that the  
20 election had been unfair and tainted. I don't doubt that. But  
21 that belief was misguided. By that time even the Republican  
22 election officials in the challenged states had said over and  
23 over, when more than 60 judges across the country had said --  
24 including Republican judges, including judges appointed by  
25 President Trump himself -- had said over and over, there is no

1 evidence behind these claims. At the end of the day the fact  
2 is that the defendant came to the Capitol because he placed his  
3 trust in someone who repaid that trust by lying to him.

4 Mr. Dresch, I want to assure you, you did and you  
5 still have the absolute right to support whoever you want to  
6 support, to rally for whoever inspires you, to vote for whoever  
7 you choose. But so does everyone else. Your vote doesn't  
8 count any more than anyone else's. You don't get to cancel  
9 them out and call for a war because you don't like the results  
10 of the election. You called yourself and the others patriots,  
11 but that's not patriotism. Patriotism is loyalty to country,  
12 loyalty to the Constitution; not loyalty to a single head of  
13 state. That's the tyranny we rejected on July 4th of 1776.

14 So this event did not honor our nation's founders; it  
15 didn't honor anyone. But to his credit, while the defendant is  
16 a big talker, his actions did not match his rhetoric. And,  
17 therefore, I pressed the government at the last status hearing  
18 to make a plea offer, and the misdemeanor plea is appropriate.  
19 And resolving this case without additional incarceration or  
20 without additional charges beyond the six months is  
21 appropriate.

22 The second thing I'm supposed to think about when I  
23 sentence someone, anyone -- and I go through this with everyone  
24 in this courtroom, in every single case -- is the history and  
25 characteristics of the defendant. I talked about that a great

1 deal in the bond review motion and at the bond hearing.

2 There's a lot of information in the record. I was well aware  
3 of the convictions arising out of the drunk driving incidents,  
4 although calling it drunk driving doesn't fairly characterize  
5 the extreme risk posed to the life of others in the high speed  
6 chase, through two states, when you refused to pull over.

7 But that's only one part of the picture. You pled  
8 guilty, you accepted responsibility here without any ambiguity  
9 about it, and that's positive. You're willing to make this  
10 personal sacrifice that's going to be necessary to make amends  
11 by paying restitution. It's not a small amount of money.

12 It's also important to say that that day and all the  
13 posts I read are not all that define you. The people that  
14 wrote letters to me described a man who is totally different  
15 than the one on social media. The record still contains all  
16 the letters about your hard-working nature, your commitment to  
17 being a good father to your 13-year-old son, your efforts to  
18 help elderly neighbors, your sense of humor, your kindness, the  
19 friendship that's available; that's all equally a part of who  
20 you are.

21 It may be that being online gets you agitated; maybe  
22 that's where you vent, maybe that's where you show off. But  
23 now you're a man in your 40s, with a teenage son. So the  
24 question is, which of those men do you want to be? I hope you  
25 spend some time thinking about how you can a positive force in



1 his life, the way your father was in yours, when you get home.

2 The Court's required to impose a sentence that's  
3 sufficient but not greater than necessary to accomplish a  
4 number of purposes set out in the statute. Therefore, another  
5 thing every judge has to consider is the need for the sentence  
6 imposed to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote  
7 respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the  
8 offense. I think the punishment is just, but I think this is  
9 really important because I'm not sure that respect for the law  
10 has been really shown in the past or in the comments on social  
11 media.

12 I'm supposed to deter you and other people from  
13 further criminal conduct here or in Michigan or anywhere else.  
14 I'm supposed to protect the public from further crimes  
15 committed by you, and to provide you with educational or  
16 vocational training, medical care, correctional treatment. And  
17 none of that is really relevant.

18 I'm also supposed to look at the need to avoid  
19 unwarranted sentencing disparities among defendants with  
20 similar records who have been found guilty of similar conduct.  
21 And basically that's a long-winded way of saying I'm supposed  
22 to make sure that your sentence is fair when you compare it to  
23 sentences that people have gotten who did similar things. The  
24 guidelines are supposed to serve that function, they really  
25 have limited utility here.

1           Ensuring that the sentence fairly reflects where this  
2       individual defendant falls on the spectrum of individuals  
3       arrested in connection with the offense has largely been  
4       accomplished by the offer of the misdemeanor plea because it  
5       reduces his exposure substantially and appropriately.

6           I also think it's important to take into  
7       consideration that the six months this defendant spent in D.C.  
8       jail while this case proceeded wasn't the same experience he  
9       would have had a year or so before. It's true, he was  
10      incarcerated through no one's fault but his own, but his jail  
11      experience has been overshadowed by the specter of the virus  
12      the need for more isolation; less opportunity for contact with  
13      counsel and family, less opportunity to move within the  
14      facility. In other words, he has been through harsher  
15      conditions and limited opportunities for programs, which if  
16      he'd had a longer sentence could have been a basis for a  
17      departure when you're talking about immigrants in the *Smith*  
18      case.

19           So, that's another reason why I can easily conclude  
20      that the sentence is sufficient to provide just punishment and  
21      to afford deterrence and to satisfy the need to avoid  
22      unwarranted sentencing disparities.

23           The sentencing statute says I'm also supposed to  
24      consider the need to provide restitution, and that is going to  
25      be part of the sentence by agreement.

1           Therefore, in an exercise of my discretion, after  
2           consideration of all the statutory factors, the sentence to be  
3           imposed is as follows: It's the judgment of the Court that you  
4           are hereby sentenced to a period of time served on Count 5.

5           Since the statutes that govern criminal sentencing do  
6           not permit a period of supervised release for this offense,  
7           there will be no further term of supervised release.

8           I find the defendant does not have the ability to pay  
9           a fine and, therefore, I waive the imposition of a fine.  
10          However, you are required to pay the \$10 special assessment,  
11          and that's immediately payable to the Clerk of the Court for  
12          the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia. And  
13          within 30 days of any change of address you have to notify the  
14          Clerk of the Court until such time as that obligation has been  
15          paid in full.

16          You've also agreed to pay restitution in the amount  
17          of \$500. I'm not sure I have, in any of the paperwork, where,  
18          to whom it's supposed to be paid. I presume it's supposed to  
19          be paid to the Clerk of the District Court of the District of  
20          Columbia. But, Ms. Blackwell, you're going to need to inform  
21          Mr. Haley, before we complete the judgment and commitment  
22          order, who the money is supposed to be dispersed to.

23          Mr. Dresch, you have the right to appeal the sentence  
24          imposed by this Court if the period of imprisonment is longer  
25          than the statutory maximum or the sentence departs upward from

1 the applicable sentencing guideline range. If you choose to  
2 appeal, you must file any appeal within 14 days after the Court  
3 enters judgment. If you're unable to afford the cost of  
4 appeal, you may request permission from the Court to file an  
5 appeal without cost to you.

6 At this point I believe the government needs to make  
7 a motion to dismiss Counts 1 through 4 of the indictment.

8 MS. BLACKWELL: Yes, Your Honor. The government  
9 moves to dismiss Counts 1 through 4 of the indictment.

10 THE COURT: All right. So that will be granted.  
11 We've already dealt with the sealed memoranda. We're going to  
12 issue a release order promptly.

13 Mr. Smith is there anything else I need to take up on  
14 behalf of Mr. Dresch right now?

15 MR. SMITH: No, Your Honor. As I said, we'll pay the  
16 \$510 within two weeks. I don't know if that needs to be  
17 specified -- I mean, that's what we'll do.

18 THE COURT: I can order that that be done. He's not  
19 under my supervision thereafter, but it is a part of the  
20 sentence and you will owe the money no matter what.

21 MR. SMITH: I understand.

22 THE COURT: All right. Ms. Blackwell, anything  
23 further for the government?

24 MS. BLACKWELL: Nothing from the government, Your  
25 Honor. Thank you.

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THE COURT: Okay. Thank you very much, everyone.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Your Honor.

\* \* \*

CERTIFICATE OF OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

I, JANICE DICKMAN, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing constitutes a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes and is a full, true and complete transcript of the proceedings to the best of my ability.

Dated this 4th day of August, 2021

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